

MUCOSAL BIOPSY OF THE GASTROINTESTINAL TRACT. By Richard Whitehead. Second Edition. (Pp 241; Illustrated. £14.00). Philadelphia, London, Toronto: Saunders and Eastbourne; Holt-Saunders. 1979.

THE rapid development of gastroenterology as a specialty over the past decade has resulted in an ever-increasing flow of endoscopic biopsies to the histopathologist. The first edition of this book rapidly proved an invaluable aid in elucidating the frequent diagnostic problems associated with the tiny mucosal samples. The second edition has been further improved by the inclusion of many more microphotographs with clear cytological details. The text, where appropriate, has also been expanded to incorporate recent advances. Common and rare diseases of the stomach, small and large intestine are all covered. Particularly useful are the descriptions of early gastric malignancy and the subtle differentiating factors between ulcerative colitis, Crohn's disease and ischaemic colitis. This is an essential bench book for the histopathologist, but should also be read by the practising gastroenterologist. A comprehensive and up-to-date bibliography is included.

J.D.B.

TOPICS IN ANAESTHESIA AND INTENSIVE CARE. By J. A. Thornton and C. J. Levy. (Pp viii + 158; Figs. 33. £4.60). London: Kempton. 1979.

I FOUND this book which the authors say is aimed at medical students on anaesthetic attachment, most disappointing. Although it contains some good and useful material, it deals with topics very superficially and in an elementary manner. Surely four lines is barely enough to cover dental anaesthesia.

The opening chapter on the pre-operative assessment is good although the sections on case history and examination would benefit by being expanded and given sub-headings.

Chapter 2, headed 'induction and maintenance of the anaesthetic state', is most disappointing. First of all it includes several topics which have little to do with the title and despite the title inhalation induction is not mentioned. The section on anaesthetic apparatus is much too brief and would have benefited given a chapter to itself. The section on applied physiology seems likewise out of place and one wonders what mechanical ventilation and I.P.P.V. have to do with monitoring. The pharmacology of the drugs used in anaesthesia is too brief to be helpful. A good account is given of the technique of intravenous induction, but the advice to withdraw the needle following loss of consciousness is surely dangerous in the absence of an alternative intravenous route. The technique of laryngoscopy and intubation is well described, but how does one extend the head on the neck and flex the atlanto-occipital joint.

Students and indeed housemen should find the chapters on 'water and electrolyte balance', 'blood volume, loss and replacement' and 'intensive care' useful and an aid to patient management. The chapter on chronic pain and local and regional anaesthesia would probably have been better if it had been divided into separate chapters. The facts and figures chapter and the glossary are both useful.

J.A.S.G./J.W.D.

HISTOPATHOLOGY OF CARDIAC ARRHYTHMIAS. By Lino Rossi. Second Edition. (Pp xii + 299; Figs. 130 and plates 8. £23.00). Milan: Casa Editrice Ambrosiana and London Lloyd-Luke. 1978.

ESPECIALLY in the past decade advances in clinical electro-cardiographic techniques have greatly enhanced the clinical recognition and assessment of cardiac arrhythmias. Anatomical study of the affected hearts has in no way kept pace. Apart from those in a few special centres pathologists have contributed little or nothing.

This book well illustrates and documents the very detailed study necessary and the difficulties likely to be encountered. There is no doubt that careful and meticulous work will reveal valuable anatomical detail relevant to these lesions, but much control material from more normal hearts still requires detailed study. No one should attempt morphological study without this invaluable guide which gives technical details, illustrates and assesses the lesions found and relates the findings to the growing literature on the subject.

J.E.M.